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THE MINISTERS OF THE SECESSION CHURCH.

WE are aware that our utterance of sentiments favourable to the ministers of the Presbyterian Secession Church may, by some, be attributed to a determination to stand by "our order," and maintain at all hazards the cause of our brethren. For ministers of the Gospel, and especially for those in our own communion, we do feel a fond partiality; and we confess, moreover, that, instead of tearing that partiality from our bosoms, it shall be our object to cherish it until our latest breath. We delight in the success and prosperity of their labours: we mourn over any indications of an opposite tendency which may occasionally present themselves. But let not the reader entertain any apprehension respecting the impellent force of this acknowledged partiality; for beyond the limits of truth and duty it shall not drive us; while yet we will adopt its generous suggestions in despite of the promptings of false modesty.

The pastoral relation is one of a peculiarly solemn character. Its obligations, duties, encouragements, all point to another world. Regarded in the light of unprejudiced reason, or in the superior light of Divine revelation, it appears invested with an importance which should stimulate pastor and people to fidelity in their respective situations. The interests of society are confessedly indebted, for their stability and security, to the influence of "pure and undefiled religion;" and this influence cannot convey the fulness of its blessings, where the pastoral relation is on either side violated or disregarded. Genuine religion cements the community in the enjoyment of amity and peace;—it teaches men to love each other as brethren, to be just, to be courteous. Genuine religion applies a healing

balm to the wounds of society—resisting the power of disease and death, and restoring our race to moral health and soundness. For the disorders which prevail in the world, genuine religion alone furnishes a sovereign specific; and it is therefore of universal concern, that the advantages which she liberally confers be maintained and perpetuated. Now we affirm it to be matter of historical certainty, that the pastoral office, when duly executed, has been a most effective agency in the hand of God in inspiring the human mind with right principles of action, and developing the resources of Christian benevolence. This, it is true, is a subordinate department of Christianity: yet it supplies cogent reasons for extending her pure and peaceful dominion over the world. How much more should we be roused to interest our hearts in the publication of the Gospel, and in defending the sacredness, and securing the efficiency, of the office of its ministers, when we reflect that the Gospel is “the power of God and the wisdom of God to the salvation of souls.” Whether the life that now is, or that which is to come, or both, be considered, the relations subsisting between minister and people are most important and interesting, as they are intimately connected with our present well-being and our future felicity.

We believe it to be impossible for any man of ordinary feeling to be present at one of our ordinations, without being deeply affected with the solemnity of the whole scene. The people having exercised, it is to be presumed, much prayerful deliberation, have chosen a pastor to break among them the bread of life. They voluntarily promise him due submission in the Lord, and they pledge themselves to contribute liberally of their substance for his worldly support. On his part, there is a public profession of devotedness to the cause of his Lord and Master; and, having accepted the call of the congregation, and acquitted himself in a series of close and searching trials and examinations to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, he now stands forward to be solemnly invested with the sacred office, and to recognize in the face of the people his Christian obligations. The services of praise and prayer and preaching, on such occasions, are peculiarly impressive, partly from their own nature and suitableness, and partly from the associated interest of the hallowed scene.

Would it not be a profitable exercise for ministers of the Gospel to devote an hour now and again to serious meditation on the time when they were set apart to the ministry “by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery?” The remembrance of the first ordination which it was our privilege to

attend, is, at present, fresh before our mind as the recollections of yesterday. It was a day of sunny promise. Its services, we doubt not, are at this moment sanctified in the memory of many humble followers of Jesus. Never was there more cheering evidence of love between pastor and people: never was there fairer hope of long life and prosperity in the enjoyment of Christian ordinances. But that hope is now covered with the pall of dark disappointment; and the pastor who was then full of health and life, and endowed with shining talents—alas! while we are tracing these lines, *the green grass waves on his tomb, and proclaims to the passing breeze* THE CURSE OF ARDENT SPIRIT! Ministers of the Secession—ministers of Christ throughout Ulster—and, Oh! that we could spread the warning over the wide world—beware of ardent spirit! Beware of its awfully insidious and tempting properties, as you value your own souls, and the souls of the multitudes committed to your care. Men of as sober habits, as firm resolutions, and as powerful intellects as you can pretend to, have been ruined. “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.” With unfeigned joy we survey the large proportion of Presbyterian Secession ministers who have enrolled their names in the list of the Temperance Society; and we express our confident hope, that in the increasingly enlightened state of the Christian community, friendship, and love, and hospitality, will soon cease to circulate through the medium of a poisonous drug.

The relation constituted at the period of ordination, entails on both of the parties concerned a series of momentous duties. The minister must preach, not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord; he must set forward the doctrines of grace plainly, practically, and powerfully; he must labour earnestly, and with his whole heart, for the salvation of souls; he must watch as those who shall give an account; he must be instant in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, exhorting, with all long-suffering and doctrine; he must devote the energies of mind and body to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, willing to spend and be spent for Christ; he must not be weary in well-doing, knowing that in due time he shall reap if he faint not; and giving good heed to his own personal piety, he must press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. These are considerations of unspeakable importance. Oh! it is not a light thing to come under vows in the presence of our Maker and Judge. We would press upon our own hearts, and we would urge on

the meditative attention of our brethren of the Secession, the solemnity of ordination engagements. May that God whose servants we profess to be, enable us to act faithfully in the interests of his Son's kingdom.

The obligations arising out of the relation of pastor and people are mutual, and they involve the discharge of mutual duties. Is it enjoined on the pastor to minister in sacred things? it is equally obligatory on the people to wait on his ministrations. If he is bound to preach, they are bound to hear; and it argues a melancholy decay of the spirit of religion in any worshipping assembly, when its members allow frivolous apologies—apologies too which their own consciences condemn as frivolous—to interfere with their attendance on the public service of God. It is a flagrant violation of one of the obvious fundamental principles by which fellow-worshippers are united in the bonds of Christian Society. This principle is implied in the very name of *congregation*; nor is it possible for us to find phraseology in which to describe the Christian church in its associated capacity, without assuming, on the part of the members, obedience to the apostolic injunction, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." To the people of the Secession Church, then, we would say, let no paltry excuse detain you from the house of prayer. You owe it to Christ, the King and Head of the church, to attend diligently and regularly on the ordinances of grace which he has appointed. You owe it to your fellow-christians, to assemble with them for your mutual comfort and edification in the things of God. You owe it to your own souls, to come to the place where God is pleased, in a peculiar manner, to administer spiritual food for their sustenance. You owe it to the minister, who, in compliance with your express invitation, stands up to preach to you "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God." When you perversely, and in the face of your very profession of religion, absent yourself from public ordinances, you are letting down your ministers hands, and, so far as in your power, giving the victory to *his* enemies and *your own*. Where the custom of bad attendance on the worship of God prevails, it is one of the sorest and heaviest discouragements against which a faithful pastor has to struggle; while it operates as a blight and a mildew on religion throughout a congregation. People of the Secession, strengthen the hands of your ministers, by wrestling in prayer to God on their behalf, and encourage them in their public ministrations by regular and punctual attendance; and you will experience, in thus faith-

fully performing your duty, abundant blessing through the increasing interest which they will almost unavoidably feel in the salvation of your souls. When thus employed in watering others, you shall be watered yourselves.

In the congregations of the Secession Church, we have often observed and commended the conduct of a number of individuals, who evince a very proper anxiety to bring out as many members as possible of their families to public worship. Why should not this spirit prevail universally? It is to be apprehended that multitudes are not alive to the importance of forming, at an early period of life, those habits which experience proves to be most favourable to the influence of religion. It is truly ominous for the rising generation to find perhaps large families, some of whom are almost grown, and yet, with few exceptions, have never appeared in the house of God. And then parents will complain of the obstinacy and untractableness of their children, when the guilt lies primarily and chiefly on their own careless heads! Were parents at all sensible of the extent to which Sabbath profanation is carried in their absence, or did they weigh the nature of the vows which they have made to God, greater exertion would unquestionably be evinced by them to interest the young and pliant minds of their children in the public services of the sanctuary. There is grievous neglect in this matter, and we happen to know that there are as grievous consequences attending that neglect. O that we could bring before the hearts and consciences of parents the fearful catalogue of beggary, and crime, and disgrace, and public execution, which are to be traced to the early disregard of religious ordinances, leading to awful Sabbath profanation, and from thence, by rapid strides, conducting to public infamy and ruin. Should these remarks fall into the hands of any Christian parent who is not guiltless of the charge which they bring, we entreat him to take steps for effecting an immediate change in the religious economy of his household. God will expect such a change, and the salvation of his children's souls demands it in a voice of thunder.

The ministers of the Secession Church have peculiar claims on the sympathy and co-operation of the people. One of the great reasons which induced our forefathers—the Eiskines and Fishers of other days—to come out of the Erastian Church of Scotland, was the existence of patronage, an intolerable nuisance, and a godless infringement on the rights of the Christian people. Patronage places it in the power of a few or of one—he may be an Episcopalian—he may be a Papist—he may be

an Infidel—to dictate to a free-born Presbyterian people who shall be their pastor; thus wrenching from the members of the church the inalienable right of choosing for themselves. This unholy system, somewhat modified, is still in existence in the Scottish Established Church. Against this crying enormity the ministers of the Secession lifted up their voice, and they have met the monster with steady and uncompromising opposition for more than a century. Our fathers girded on their armour to maintain the doctrines of the word of God as exhibited in the Westminster Confession, and to defend the rights of the Christian people from the attack of sacrilegious spoliation. The people loved them for their soundness in the faith, and admired their Christian fortitude and patriotism. The fathers of the Secession cast themselves, under the Divine blessing, on the sympathies and religious principle of the people, and the God in whom they trusted raised them up friends wherever they went. Members of the Secession in Ireland, the rights for which our fathers contended are preserved to you: the doctrines of grace which they held dearer than life are proclaimed from our pulpits; and, by the favour of Providence, you can look to your ministers as emphatically the *men of your choice*;—do not all these considerations then endear them to your hearts, and secure on their behalf your affectionate and cordial co-operation?

We might be expected to urge on you, people of the Secession, that department of your Christian obligations, in which you stand pledged before God and man to contribute liberally to the support of those who labour among you in word and doctrine. But we shall dismiss it with a single observation. You wish your minister efficiently to discharge the duties of his important office; do not then leave him in embarrassed or necessitous circumstances. It will greatly damp his ardour; and, in the end, deprive yourselves of the vigour and freshness of a mind free from the pressure and pinchings of a narrow, and niggardly, and inadequate income.

We heartily bless God for the ties of Christian peace and harmony which connect pastor and people throughout the numerous congregations of the Secession,—giving her a unity and stability with which she may, under the guidance of the church's Head, triumphantly meet the assaults of the common enemy, trusting in the God of her salvation. We commend the ministers of the Secession to the love, and prayers, and co-operation of the Christian people; and we commend, both to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to keep them from falling, and to build them up, and to give to them an in-

heritance among all them that are sanctified; and we pray, that each may take as his motto and watchword, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

WICLIF.

THE LANGUAGE OF PALESTINE.

THE language of Palestine was, in ancient times, the common language of Western Asia, THE ARAMEAN—the same as that which was spoken by the CANAANITE natives, and which, subsequently, by the HEBREWS, the progeny of *Abraham*, who was a new settler of that country, was called the *Hebrew* language, it being the peculiar language of that nation. The adolescence of this language, or the period of its development towards that degree of perfection which we find it to have attained in the writings of the Old Testament, does surely not extend beyond the age of DAVID and SOLOMON, and the age of the Prophet Schools established by SAMUEL—its golden age lasted from the time of David to the Babylonian Captivity, and, during this period probably, a great part of the sacred writings of the Jews was composed. By the Babylonian Captivity, this old Hebrew tongue was expatriated by the *Aramaic*, which was current in Babylon, and which, as its pronunciation was somewhat broad and vulgar, bore the same relationship to the Hebrew, as the Lower Saxon dialect to High Germany, [or Lowland Scottish to English:] this Babylonian Aramaic soon became the national language of the Jews, the ancient Hebrew for some time still remaining the language of literature, although, it must be admitted, that fragments, written in *Aramaic*, are found in the sacred volumes composed in the later part of this period.

At the time of Jesus Christ, the ancient Hebrew was completely extinct, even in its character of language of literature; and all the Jews at that period residing in Palestine spoke and wrote the Aramaic. Jesus too, spoke this language; and the names *Cephas*, (John i. 42,) Boanerges, (Mark iii. 17,) Barnabas, (Acts iv. 36;) as also the expressions: *Talitha kumi*, (Mark v. 41,) Abba, (Ib. xiv. 36,) *Eli, Eli*, &c. (Matth. xxvii. 46,) are specimens of it.

People of liberal education spoke this language as it was written, but the common people, as generally is the case, spoke it in different dialects. The dialect of Jerusalem and Judea was most correct; but that which prevailed in Samaria, and

particularly that of Galilee, was much more rude than the former, full of contractions and mutilations; letters were omitted in it, and one guttural exchanged for another, so that, for example, according to the careless and irregular pronunciation of the Galilean dialect, the same words might denote an *ass*, *wine*, *wool*, and a *lamb to be sacrificed*. A Galilean was, therefore, easily recognised by his pronunciation, (Matth. xxvi. 73,) and was never admitted as a public reader of Scripture in any synagogue of Judea. Jews residing abroad in Greek countries, particularly in Egypt, had completely adopted the Greek language as their own; and even in Palestine itself, where abhorrence against every thing foreign was affected, it seems that, partly through intercourse with Jews residing abroad who spoke Greek, partly through the neighbourhood to Syria and Egypt, where Greek was generally spoken, and partly through Greek residents, of whom, especially in Galilee and Perea, vast numbers dwelt among the Jews, the Greek had become generally known and current.* This appears from Acts vi. 1-6, where a considerable number of the primitive members of the Christian community at Jerusalem is stated to have been *Hellenistic*, or Greek speaking; and also from Acts xxii. 40, compared with xxii. 2, where the Jews expected PAUL, who had been accused by Greek Jews, to address them in Greek, but were delighted to hear him speak to them in the language of the country. Several other hints to the same effect need not here be mentioned. Whether *Jesus* himself understood and spoke Greek cannot be determined for certain, although it is highly probable; because in Galilee and Perea he was in frequent intercourse with foreigners; because, even in Jerusalem, an interview with him was sought by Greeks, John xii. 20, and these surely spoke no other language than Greek; because, we must suppose that the conferences between Jesus and Pilate, mentioned in John xviii. 33-37, and xix. 9-11, were certainly carried on neither in Aramaic nor Latin, but in *Greek*; and because Mary, in her conversation with Jesus, John xx. 14, sqq., seems to have made use of the Greek language until she recognised him as

* DR. JOHANN FR. RÖHR, the author of the above remarks, attempts to illustrate the fact of the prevalence of Greek in Palestine, by a reference to Acts ii. 7-11; but he has entirely mistaken the meaning of that passage. The exercise of a little discrimination might have saved him from confounding the direct and immediate gifts of the Spirit of God with the acquisitions of social intercourse or literary industry.

arisen from the dead, when she instantly returns to the familiar Aramaic, to which, in daily intercourse with him she was accustomed, and addressed him with the word *Rabboni*. The Apostles, too, being Galileans, must be supposed to have been more or less acquainted with Greek, even during the three years of their familiar intercourse with Jesus, although it may have been only at a subsequent period, that they, in their vocation as messengers of the Gospel, rendered themselves more perfect masters of it, so as to be able to express in writing their thoughts in that language.

The Latin language was spoken in Palestine only by Romans, and in the Roman garrisons, and, perhaps, understood by a few Jews.

The circumstance that Pilate fastened to the cross the cause for which Jesus suffered death, in the HEBREW, the GREEK, and the LATIN LANGUAGE, (John xix. 20,) seems to express, with accuracy, the relation in which the prevailing languages of Palestine stood to one another. The first was the language of the country; in the next degree to it the Greek prevailed; and last, or in the most limited degree, the Latin, although it was the language of government. General philology, or the knowledge of foreign tongues, acquired with the view of gathering information from books written in them, was at no period common among the Jews, because, in their estimation, the treasures of all wisdom and knowledge were only to be sought in their sacred writings.—*Biblical Cabinet*.

HOW TO PREACH.

An abstract of Finney's Twelfth Lecture.

“He that winneth souls is wise.”

FIRST, in regard to the MATTER of preaching.

1. All preaching should be practical. The proper end of all doctrine is practice. A vast deal of preaching in the present day is called doctrinal, as opposed to practical preaching. The very idea of making this distinction is a device of the devil. God always brings in doctrine to regulate practice. If a man preaches no doctrine he preaches no Gospel. And if he does not preach it in a practical way he does not preach the Gospel. A loose exhortatory style of preaching may affect the passions, and may produce excitement, but it will never sufficiently instruct the people to secure sound conversion. On the

other hand, preaching doctrine in an abstract manner may fill the head with notions, but will never sanctify the heart or life.

2. Preaching should be direct. The Gospel should be preached *to* men, not *about* them. A preacher will never do his people good further than he succeeds in convincing each individual that he means him. Let him rebuke the sinner not the sin.

3. A preacher should hunt after sinners and Christians wherever they have entrenched themselves in inaction. It is not the design of preaching to make men easy and quiet, but to make them *act*.

A minister should know the religious opinions of every sinner in his congregation. Every sinner is in possession of some darling *lie*, with which he is quieting himself. Let the minister find it out and get it away, either in the pulpit or in private, or the man will go to hell in his sins.

4. It is of great importance that the sinner should be made *to feel his guilt*, and not be left to the impression that he is *unfortunate*. Multitudes of the books written for children and for adults, too, within the last twenty years, have run into this mistake in an alarming degree. Mrs. Sherwood's writings have this fault standing out upon almost every page. They are not calculated to make the sinner blame and condemn himself. Until you can do this, the Gospel will never take effect.

5. A prime object with the preacher must be to make *present obligation* felt. The impression is too seldom made by ministers, that sinners are to repent *now*.

6. Sinners ought to be made to feel that they have *something* to do, and that is to repent: that is something which *no other* being can do for them. Religion is something *to do*, not something to wait for: and sinners must do it now, or they are in danger of eternal death.

7. Ministers should never rest satisfied till they have *annihilated* every excuse of sinners. Make the sinner see and feel that *all* pleas in excuse for not submitting to God, are an act of rebellion against him. Tear away the last *lie* which he grasps in his hand, and make him feel that he is absolutely condemned before God.

8. Sinners should be made to feel that if they *now* grieve away the Spirit of God, it is very probable that they will be lost for ever. They should be made to understand *why* they are dependent on the Spirit, and that it is not because they physically *cannot* do what God commands, but because they are *unwilling*; but that they are so unwilling, that it is just as

certain they will not repent without the Holy Ghost, as if they were now in hell. They are so opposed, and so unwilling, that they will never repent unless God sends his Holy Spirit upon them. Show them, too, that a sinner under the Gospel, who hears the truth preached, if converted at all, is generally converted young. When the truth is preached, sinners are either Gospel-hardened, or converted. I know that some old sinners are converted, but they are exceptions, and by no means common.

Secondly, the MANNER of preaching.

1. It should be *conversational*. Preaching, to be understood, should be colloquial in its style. Nothing is more calculated to make a sinner feel that religion is a mysterious thing that he cannot understand, than this mouthing, formal, lofty style of speaking, so generally employed in the pulpit.

2. It must be the language of common life. The words should be such as are in common use. Jesus Christ invariably used words of the most common kind. The language of the Gospel is the plainest, simplest, and most easily understood of any language in the world.

3. Preaching should be parabolical; that is, illustrations should be constantly drawn from incidents, real or supposed. Jesus Christ constantly illustrated his instructions in this way. He would either advance a principle and then illustrate it by a parable, that is a short story of some event, real or imaginary, or else he would bring out the principle in the parable. Truths not illustrated are generally just as well calculated to convert sinners as a mathematical demonstration.

4. The illustrations should be drawn from common life, and the common business of society. I once heard a minister illustrate his ideas by the manner in which merchants transact business. Another minister who was present made some remarks to him afterwards. He objected to this illustration particularly, because, he said, it was too familiar, and was letting down the dignity of the pulpit. He said that all illustrations in preaching should be drawn from ancient history, or from some elevated source that would keep up the dignity of the pulpit. Dignity, indeed—just the language of the devil: he rejoices in it. The object of an illustration is to make people *see the truth*, not to bolster up pulpit dignity. The illustration should, if possible, be a matter of common occurrence; and the more common the occurrence, the more sure it will be not to fix attention on *itself*, but to serve as a medium through which truth is conveyed. The Saviour always illustrated his instructions by things that were taking place among the people to

whom he preached, and with which their minds were familiar. He descended often very far below what is now supposed to be essential to support the dignity of the pulpit. He talked about hens and chickens, and children in market-places, and sheep and lambs, shepherds, farmers, husbandmen, and merchants.

5. Preaching should be repetitious. If a minister wishes to preach with effect, he must not be afraid of repeating whatever he sees is not perfectly understood by his hearers. I was conversing with one of the first advocates in this country. He said, the difficulty which preachers find in making themselves understood is, that they do not repeat enough. In addressing a jury, said he, I always expect that whatever I wish to impress on their minds I shall have to repeat at least twice, and often I repeat it three or four times, and even more, otherwise I do not carry their minds along with me, so that they can feel the force of what comes afterwards. In like manner the minister ought to turn over an important thought, over and over, before his audience, till even the children understand it perfectly. This will not disgust thinking men. They are not weary of the efforts which a minister makes to be understood. I know that men of the first minds often get ideas which they never had before from illustrations which were designed to bring the Gospel down to the comprehension of a child. Such men are commonly so occupied with the affairs of the world, that they do not think much on the subject of religion, and they, therefore, need the plainest preaching, and they like it.

6. A minister should always feel deeply his subject, and then he will suit the action to the word, and the word to the action, so as to make the full impression which the truth is calculated to make. If a man *feels* his subject fully, he will naturally do the very thing that elocution laboriously teaches. See any common man in the streets who is earnest in talking. See a woman or a child in earnest. How natural the eloquence. Let but the minister speak as he feels, and act as he feels, and he is eloquent.

No wonder that a great deal of preaching produces so little effect. This is of more importance than is generally thought. Mere words will never express the full meaning of the Gospel. The *manner* of saying it is almost every thing. Suppose one of you that is a mother goes home to-night, and as soon as you get into the door the nurse comes rushing up to you with her soul in her countenance, and tells you that your child is burned to death. You would believe it, and you would feel

it too at once. But suppose she comes and tells it in a cold and careless manner. Would that arouse you? No. It is the earnestness of her manner, and the distress of her looks that tell the story. You know that something is the matter before she speaks a word. I once heard a remark made respecting a young preacher, which was instructive. The manner, it was said, in which he comes in, and sits in the pulpit, and rises to speak, is a sermon itself. It shows that he has something to say that is important and solemn. That man's manner of saying some things I have known to move the feelings of a whole congregation, when the same things said in a prosing way would have produced no effect at all. A statement made by one of the most distinguished professors of elocution in the United States, ought to impress ministers on this subject. He was an infidel. I have been, said he, fourteen years employed in teaching elocution to ministers, and I know that they don't believe the Christian religion. I can demonstrate that they don't. The perfection of my art is to teach them to speak naturally on this subject. I go to their studies and converse with them, and they talk eloquently. I say to them, Gentlemen, if you will preach just as you naturally speak on any other subject in which you are interested, you do not need to be taught. That is just what I am trying to teach you. I hear you talk on other subjects with admirable force and eloquence. I see you go into the pulpit, and you speak and act as if you did not believe what you are saying. I have told them, again and again, to talk in the pulpit as they naturally talk to me, and I cannot make them do it; and so I know they do not believe the Christian religion.

7. A minister should aim to convert his congregation. But, you will ask, does not all preaching aim at this? No. A minister always has *some* aim in preaching, but most sermons were never aimed at converting sinners; and if sinners were converted under them, the preacher himself would be amazed. I once heard a fact on this point. There were two young ministers who had entered the ministry at the same time. One of them had great success in converting sinners, the other none. The latter inquired of the other one day what was the reason of this difference. He replied, I aim at a different end from you in preaching. My object is to convert sinners, but you aim at no such thing; and then you go and lay it to sovereignty in God, that you do not produce the same effect when you never aim at it.

8. A minister must anticipate the objections of sinners and

answer them. What does the lawyer do when pleading before a jury. He anticipates every objection which may be made by his antagonist, and carefully removes or explains it.

9. If a minister means to preach the Gospel with effect, he must be sure not to be monotonous. Any monotonous sound, great or small, if continued, disposes people to sleep. The falls of Niagara, or the roaring of the ocean, would hush men to sleep. A minister should address the feelings enough to secure attention, and then deal with the conscience, and probe to the quick. Appeals to the feelings alone will never convert sinners. If a preacher deals much in these, he may get up an excitement, and have wave after wave of feeling flow over the congregation, and people may be carried away in the flood with false hopes. The only way to secure sound conversion is to deal faithfully with the conscience. If attention flags at any time, appeal to the feelings again, and rouse it up; but do your *work* with conscience.

We may learn from these observations that a minister's course of study and training for his work should be exclusively theological. I mean just as I say. I am not now going to discuss the question whether all education ought not to be theological. But I say education for the ministry should be exclusively so. But you will ask, should not a minister understand science? I would answer, Yes; the more the better. I would that ministers should understand all science. But it should all be in connexion with theology. Studying science is studying the works of God; and studying science is studying God. Let the scholar be asked, for instance, this question—Is there a God? To answer it let him ransack the universe; let him go out into every department of science to find the proofs of design, and in this way to learn the existence of God. Let him next inquire—Whether there are more gods than one? and let him again ransack creation to see whether there is such a *unity* of design as evinces that there is one God. In like manner, let him inquire respecting the attributes of God and his character. He will learn science here, but he will learn it as a part of theology. Let him search every field of knowledge to bring forward his proofs. What was the design of this plant? What was the end of that arrangement? See whether every thing you find in the universe is not calculated to produce happiness unless perverted. Would the student's heart get hard and cold in study, as cold and hard as the college walls, if science were pursued in this way? Every lesson brings him right up before God, and is, in fact, communion with God;

and warms his heart, and makes him more pious, more solemn, more holy. The very distinction between classical and theological study is a curse to the church, and a curse to the world. The student spends years in college at classical studies and no God in them, and then years at theological studies—and what then? Poor young man! Set him to work, and you will find that he is not educated for the ministry at all. The church groans under his preaching, because he does not preach with unction or with power. He has been spoiled in training.

Finally, it is the duty of the church to pray for us ministers. None of us is such as he ought to be. Like Paul, we can say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" But who of us is like Paul? We have been wrongly educated all of us. Pray for the schools, and colleges, and seminaries; and pray for young men who are preparing for the ministry. Pray for ministers that God would give them wisdom to win souls; and pray that God would bestow upon the church the wisdom and means to educate a generation of ministers, who will go forward and convert the world. The church must travail in prayer, and groan and agonize for this. The world is to be converted, and therefore God intends to have ministers who will do it. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

A.

CLAIMS OF THE BIBLE.

SUPPOSE that I had never heard of Jesus Christ, or of his religion. A book is presented to me. I open it. It is the Bible. I begin to read it. It declares itself to be the word of God. It assures me, that it was given by inspiration of God, and that the holy men who penned it were moved by the Holy Ghost. I conclude, therefore, that it cannot contain any thing erroneous or untrue, and that every thing necessary to be known or done, in order to eternal happiness, is to be found in it. I read further in this book. I find that it comes down, as a great gift, from God to man, and I conclude, therefore, that it is the common right and property of all. It is addressed to all. Its discoveries, precepts, threatenings and promises, are directed to every individual in particular. It requires every human being to whom it comes to receive it, and submit to it, both because it is a revelation from God, and is therefore clothed

with Divine authority, and because it is the fountain of all saving knowledge. Impressed by these considerations, I search the Scriptures. I regard the Bible with a veneration beyond that which is due to any human authority. I store my mind with its sacred contents. I apply to it as my instructor, and as the only rule of faith and manners. Its truths, directions, examples, and encouragements are faithfully treasured up. Thus influenced and guided, I become wise, virtuous, useful, and happy.

I shall suppose that a person in the character of a religious teacher comes to me. He declares himself a teacher of religion. I ask him, of what religion? He replies, of the religion of Jesus Christ. Aware that there are various systems embraced by professing Christians, each of which lays claim to truth, I present the sacred volume, and request him to place before me a summary of the doctrines and duties which he is in the habit of inculcating, with a reference to those portions of Scripture from which he professes to deduce them. To my surprise, however, I find a number of things which he advances, for which he is able to adduce no Scripture authority. I demand the reason of this. He replies, "The Bible is certainly a book which demands our entire reverence; it contains a revelation from God: but then, a number of additional particulars have been handed down by tradition from the fathers, and received by the church; and though these particulars are not to be found in the Bible, yet we should receive them on the authority of tradition and the church." I immediately say to him in return, "Sir, I cannot receive you, or bid you God speed as a minister of religion. You do not deny the Bible, but you do not abide strictly and entirely by its contents. The Bible, and the Bible only, is the fountain of the religion of Christ. By this, and this only, will I regulate my faith. Whatever I find here, I will receive on the authority of God; but what is not written here, I will not credit on the authority of man. Whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil." Now in acting in this way, am I guilty of any arrogance or presumption? Am I pushing my right of private judgment beyond its just limits? Am I undervaluing or setting at naught the *ministry* of the word, an appointed means of grace, as well as the word itself? By no means. In counting money, we all know that it is a good rule not to take any one's word for it, but count the money purselves: in religion, is it not a rule equally good, to take nothing upon trust, but always search the Scriptures for ourselves? And for this, have I not both Scrip-

ture precept and Scripture precedent? We are commanded to try the spirits, for many false prophets are gone out into the world. The Bereans are commended, because, while they received the word with all readiness of mind, they searched the Scriptures daily whether the things preached even by apostles, were so; and, respecting the religious teacher who brings not this doctrine, we are directed not to receive him into our house, nor bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is a partaker of his evil deeds. How is his doctrine to be tested? By an appeal to Scripture. Who is to do this? I am responsible; and, therefore, I cannot surrender my judgment and conscience to minister or magistrate. I must search the Scripture for myself. But may I not err? Ought I not to be humble, and ought I not to respect the judgment of the wise and good? Most certainly; but still I have both a *right* to exercise, and a *duty* to perform; and that right and that duty is, humbly and with prayer for God's good Spirit to teach me, to search the Scriptures for myself.

I shall suppose another case. I go to a place of worship. A minister of the Gospel addresses the people. He professes to teach them to observe whatsoever things Christ has commanded. Though certain things should be opposed to our pride or passions, still he enforces them because they are enjoined by Christ. He declares at the same time his religious determination not to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, because Christ has not commanded them. He appeals to the sacred volume as he proceeds, and calls on each to search the Scriptures in a docile and prayerful spirit, whether these things be so. I follow him in his course, and mark his references. As soon as I return home, I turn to his references, and compare them with the doctrines he has taught. My mind is impressed with the conviction, that this man is a preacher of the truth, and that he is honest in the sacred cause. I receive the word preached by him, with all readiness of mind. I receive it not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God. I regard it as coming not on human, but on divine authority; not as a lecture on secular science, but as God's appointed instrument for saving the soul; not deriving its efficacy merely from moral suasion, but from the energy of the Spirit. In this way I feel persuaded of the truth and inspiration of the word of God, in a way superior to what can be effected by any process of reasoning whatever. It comes with power to the heart; and in the light, and conviction, and alarm, and hope, and comfort, and love which it carries into my

bosom, I feel an irresistible and engrossing conviction, that it is given by inspiration of God, nor can all the sophistry that sceptics have pestered the world with, convince me to the contrary.

I have often heard it complained from the pulpit, that the Bible was suffered to lie covered with dust, whilst the novel was eagerly perused. Now I think that this mode of putting the matter, does injustice to the Bible, and makes too much of the novel. How many thousands of persons never read novels, or have lost all taste for that description of reading? Besides, the Bible is but one book, whereas of novels, the number and variety are endless. Who ever thinks of reading the same novel a second time? Which of them will bear a third perusal? Their principal infatuation, as a decoy against the Bible, consists in their endless variety. But does the word of God fatigue by familiarity? On the contrary, like a friend, it improves by acquaintance, and he that frequents it oftenest, loves it best.

A revelation from God is possible. Shall not the Creator have access to his creatures, and make such communications to them as he thinks proper? A revelation was needed. Mankind had sunk down into gross ignorance and wickedness, and the wisdom of this world proved itself inadequate to enlighten or reclaim them. The Bible claims to be a revelation from God: by what evidences does it support its pretensions?

The Bible *must* have God for its author. It is easy to shew this; and a child can understand the proof. *The Devil* could not be the author of the Bible; its object is to destroy the works of the devil, and would the devil become his own enemy and pull down his own empire? *Bad men* could not have produced the Bible; the whole Bible is in direct opposition to those things which bad men love and practise. *Good men*, and *good angels*, neither could nor would have invented the Bible; they *would* not, because good men and good angels could not be guilty of fraud and imposture; they *could* not, because there are things revealed in the Bible which would never have entered into the heart of man to conceive, mysteries of which angels themselves are students. If, then, neither the devil, nor bad men, nor good men, nor good angels, could produce the Bible, the only conclusion to which we can come is, that God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

The harmony of the Bible is a proof of its inspiration. Human productions contain things at variance with truth and with themselves. But here is a book written by a great va-

riety of persons, in different countries and ages of the world; on various subjects, and in various styles, and yet all its parts completely harmonize. Can the same be said for any other collection of writings, especially when such a variety of persons, times, places, styles, and subjects, are taken into account? The Bible is harmonious, because it is inspired.

While the Bible is harmonious with itself, it is in perfect harmony with the facts of the surrounding world. God reveals himself by his works, as well as his word. God is truth, and he cannot be the author of revelations that contradict each other. Is there anything in the Bible that is not in perfect harmony with the laws and facts of the universe? The Bible may be put to the test here, in an immense variety of departments. It is always fatal in an imposture to appeal to particulars; but the Bible comes triumphant from the ordeal. The Bible gives us an account of the formation of the earth. Does not that account perfectly concur with all the facts which the modern discoveries in geology and astronomy have brought to light? The Bible touches upon the history of nations, whilst it is itself the most authentic of histories; its accounts are all amply borne out by the testimony of profane writers. Does it touch upon the situations and scenery of different countries? geography confirms its statements. Does it touch upon the kinds and habits of animals? natural history verifies its accuracy. Does it touch upon the manners and customs of various nations? historians and travellers verify its accounts. Does it refer much to the nature of man? all its statements are in perfect accordance with the laws and facts which respect man as a rational, social, accountable, and fallen being. Has the friend of the Bible any cause to be jealous of science, of philosophy, of learning? By no means. All sound science, all true philosophy, are in perfect harmony with Scripture. Though the Bible has been completed eighteen hundred years ago, and though modern science has made vast accessions to the stock of human knowledge, respecting nature, no new fact has been discovered at variance with any statement in the Bible. The book of Nature and the book of Scripture are both revelations from God; but without the light of inspiration, how little could we know of God or of duty—most certainly nothing of redemption; and without the light of inspiration to shine upon the book of nature, how little would its signs and characters disclose to the darkened mind of fallen man; just as the figured face of the dial, is incompetent to tell the hour of the day, in the absence of the sunshine.

The argument from prophecy is of itself sufficient to satisfy the mind as to the inspiration of Scripture. The prophecies of the Bible are very numerous and very minute. Some of these have been fulfilled, some are now fulfilling, others are yet to be fulfilled. Take, for example, the sufferings of Christ. Read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Does not this appear more like a narrative of events after they were past than a prediction of what was to come? Yet it is a prophecy of the sufferings of Christ, hundreds of years before he came in the flesh. The present condition of the Jews is a standing miracle in attestation of the truth of prophecy, and of the Bible. Now the argument is this. None can foresee future events but God. How then could the prophets foretell them? Because they were inspired: they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Inspiration only could furnish that portraiture of the human heart which the Bible presents. As face answers to face in a glass, I find the heart exactly delineated in the Bible. No other book possesses the same intimacy with the heart. No uninspired man, even with the aid of the Bible, is able to delineate the heart with the fulness and exactness with which it is delineated there. It tells me more of myself than ever I could otherwise have known, and yet so faithful is the picture to what I am conscious of within, that I wonder that I never discovered it before. Now, how am I to account for this characteristic of the Bible? Had I a private closet, containing many secrets and curiosities, to which no person was admitted, and the key of which I continually kept in my own possession; and were a person to come to me and give me an exact description of the contents of this secret closet, would I not feel surprised, and would I not be anxious to ascertain how this person came by this knowledge, which I had imagined hidden from every one but myself? How, I would ask, did he come by the key? The heart is this closet: the Bible discloses its secrets, and shows us more than we ourselves knew of them before. How did the Bible come by this knowledge? Inspiration is the key. He who made man knows what is in man; and He who knows what is in man, inspired the penmen of Scripture to reveal it.

The Bible reveals the character of God, and this is another evidence of its inspiration. Men ignorant of the word of God entertain false and unworthy views of his perfections. Some represent him as cruel and vindictive. Others regard him as so easy as to tolerate with impunity the conspiracy of sinners

against his government and laws. But in the Scriptures we have a just exhibition of the attributes of God. He is revealed as merciful, yet as by no means clearing the guilty. In the Scripture doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ, we have an amazing display of the harmony of the Divine perfections. There God is seen to be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. There God is seen to be just as merciful, and merciful as just:—just while showing mercy, and showing mercy—not by abandoning, but by exacting the claims of law and justice. Now the argument is this:—Who knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man that is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. In the Bible, the Spirit has revealed them.

No book but the Bible has ever been able to exhibit a perfect human character. Poets, orators, and philosophers, have laboured this with all their powers. They have endeavoured to paint a perfect character, by combining in one an assemblage of virtues drawn from all quarters; they have exhausted the powers of art and fiction; they have availed themselves of the efforts of their predecessors; they labour to this day, and labour without success: but the writers of the New Testament, without art and without effort, exhibit a perfect character; they give us the history of our Lord Jesus Christ. It may be said, as our Lord Jesus Christ was perfect, all the evangelists had to do, in order to exhibit a perfect character, was to give us facts, and what inspiration did it require to give us facts? Had not the evangelists been inspired, they would never have been able to apprehend or appreciate aright the character of our Lord Jesus Christ; they never would have been able to make the inward movements of his mind and the outward acts of his life harmonize together; they would not have understood him. Even after being under his instructions during the period of his public ministry, the disciples did not fully understand him. It was not till after his resurrection, and until he sent his Spirit, as he promised, to guide them into all truth, and bring all things to their remembrance, that they fully understood the mysteries of his doctrine and kingdom.

To the Bible we are indebted for the knowledge of forgiveness and of sanctification. In the book of nature we find no intimation of mercy or forgiveness. Look over the scenery of the earth, view the vicissitudes of the seasons, listen to the voice of the thunder and the tempest, cast your eyes upwards towards the starry frame, where will you find any evidence that God will pardon sin. To propitiate the Deity, man has re-

course to a variety of expedients. He offers sacrifices. He even immolates human victims. He lacerates his own body; and even puts himself to death. All is vain. It is to the word of God that we are indebted for the revelation of forgiveness, and for the method in which forgiveness is dispensed; there God sets forth his Son to be a propitiation for sins through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins. In like manner, man has recourse to a variety of vain inventions for the conquest of his corruptions. He wanders over the earth in pilgrimage; he retires to cells and caves and wildernesses; he scourges his body, and, on bare and bleeding knees, performs his circuit on the flinty rock; he makes his ablutions in wells, and rivers, and lakes of imaginary sanctifying virtue. Sin, however, is still unmortified. The deluded devotee returns to his vices, like the dog to his vomit. From the word of God, we learn how sin is subdued, and victory obtained over the passions. While it tells of pardon, which frees from the punishment of sin, it tells of repentance, which destroys the power of sin in the soul. While it tells us that we are born in sin, it tells us how the soul is born again to holiness by the Spirit from above.

The effects of the Bible, prove it to be of God. God is the enemy of all ignorance, idolatry, cruelty, tyranny, and licentiousness. Whatever promotes these is of the devil. Whatever destroys these is of God. Now what instrument avails so much to enlighten and civilize the world, as the word of God? It overthrows all false worship. It makes men religious, chaste, temperate, merciful, and just. It converts the soul, enlightens the mind, makes wise the simple, and rejoices the heart. It convinces of sin, points to the atoning cross, and fills the desponding soul with peace and joy in believing. It sustains us under difficulties, comforts us in our sorrows, makes us triumph over the fear of death, and discloses life and immortality. Why does the word of God produce all these blessed effects? Because it is of God.

I take the Christian. He that believeth hath the witness in himself. There is not only an internal evidence which the Bible has in itself, but there is an internal evidence which the heart has in the experience of its influence. This is the seal of the Spirit. Take, then, the Christian. View the man. He is converted unto God. He has found rest for his soul in Christ Jesus. He has experienced the sanctification and comfort of the Holy Spirit. His heart is in heaven, and he is travelling thither. Ask him how this has been effected.

He will tell you by the influence of the word of God upon his soul. Ask him how he knows the Bible to be true. He will tell you he feels that it is so, from the experience which he has of its blessed effects. He will say, and his argument is irresistible, "The Bible has brought my soul to God, and I therefore conclude that it has come down from God: the Bible is fitting my soul for heaven, and I therefore conclude that it has come down from heaven."

LUTHER.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH.

THOMAS ERSKINE, ESQ. ADVOCATE.

THE movement of the soul along the path of duty, under the influence of love to God, constitutes what are called good works. Good works are works which proceed from good principles. The external form of an action cannot determine whether it be good or not. Its usefulness to others may be determined by its external form, but its moral worth depends on the moral spring from which it flows. Good works are properly healthy works, or the works of a healthy mind. Healthy *bodily* actions can only proceed from healthy *bodily* principles; and healthy *spiritual* actions can proceed only from healthy *spiritual* principles. A man who has lost his health does not recover it again by the performance of healthy bodily actions, for of these his bad health renders him incapable, and in that incapacity, indeed, his bad health consists; but he recovers his health by the use of some remedial system, and as health returns, its proper and natural actions return along with it. His health is not produced by these actions, but it is followed by them and strengthened by them. The enjoyment of the body consists in these healthful actions, they are the spontaneous language of health. They constitute the music, as it were, of the organs being well tuned.—It is the same thing with the actions of the soul. Spiritual health is not first acquired by good actions; it is followed by them, and strengthened by them. They are also music, sweet music; and oh! were these spirits of ours, with their thousand strings, but rightly tuned, what swell of high and holy song would issue from them—a song of holy joy and praise, commencing even here, and still rising upwards until it mixed with the full harmony of that choir which surrounds the throne of God.

SEEKING JESUS OF NAZARETH.

“Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth which was crucified: he is risen.”—

MARK XVI. 6.

THE pious attention of the women who ministered to the Saviour during his public career, who stood by his cross in the time of his sufferings, and who were first at his tomb, has not passed unnoticed, and without commendation. They evinced a strength of attachment and a moral intrepidity, to which none of his other disciples could make the slightest pretensions. When the shepherd was smitten, the sheep, according to the intimation of the prophet, were scattered; “They all forsook him and fled.” They very naturally reasoned thus:—Our Master is taken prisoner; the power of the State has seized upon *him*; we know not what may be the issue; and as *we* have constantly associated with him, receiving his doctrine, and following in his footsteps, we are therefore in imminent danger. This cowardly spirit subdued their fortitude, and vanquished their love to the Redeemer; and hence in the moment of trial they abandoned him to his fate. This was the hour of wicked men, and the power of darkness.

Jesus was left alone, and yet he was not alone, for the Father was with him. His disciples forsook him, but still he possessed the sympathy of some hearts, which had been touched with the power of his holy doctrine, and in which he was enshrined as an object of love and veneration. There were those standing by the cross itself, whom neither fear nor favour could bribe to desert their Lord, however he might be despised by the world, and however the glory of his character might seem to be eclipsed under the ignominy of crucifixion. There were those who contemplated the Saviour on Calvary with affectionate tenderness, their hearts bleeding as they witnessed his blood flowing, but their minds supported by holy and elevating hopes of a futurity, which was to them comparatively obscure and unilluminated. Nor when the eyes of Jesus had closed in death, and his body was committed to the cold grave, did these followers of his allow their cherished expectations to sink down into sullen despair. Their views do not, indeed, appear to have immediately embraced the glorious doctrine of the resurrection; and therefore, for a season, they laboured under serious disadvantages; but love to Christ inspired their

bosoms, and *that* counterbalanced many of these disadvantages, and ultimately produced enlightened and rejoicing faith in a risen Redeemer. Their conduct affords an interesting illustration of the still more interesting assurance—"Then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord."

I. These pious women came to his sepulchre *seeking Jesus of Nazareth*. We can easily conceive how heavily and gloomily they spent what may be regarded as their last Jewish Sabbath, prior to their visit to the tomb, for the purpose of embalming his body. But the shadows of the night of sorrow had now fled, and joy was about to return with a sweetness and delight proportioned to the bitterness by which it had been preceded. Early in the morning they proceeded with trembling step to the spot where the body of Jesus *had been* laid, prepared to pay his remains a last sad token of respect before taking a final farewell. Their only fear was lest they might not find some one to roll away the stone, which was great; but such fear was groundless, as was also the expectation of meeting in the icy embrace of death, death's conqueror and Lord. The Roman guards had fallen to the earth before the lightning countenance of the angel of God; the stone was removed—and, to the inquiring looks of these devoted women, the divine messenger, with countenance bland and benignant, replied, "*Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified—he is risen.*"

II. Let it be considered how dangerous it was at this time to make any kind inquiry, or evince any solicitude respecting *Jesus of Nazareth*. Can any good thing come out of *Nazareth*? is a question which sufficiently indicates the reputation which that village had obtained among the people of Jerusalem. The prophets had foretold that Jesus should be vilified; that scorn and contumely should be heaped on his innocent head; and the fulfilment of these predictions, which are widely spread over the inspired page, was concentrated in one ignominious epithet, *the Nazarene*. There was a time, in the sojourning of the Son of God upon earth, when any who felt interested in the blessings of salvation might inquire after him with perfect safety; when the Scribes and Pharisees, however deep and rancorous their hatred against one who had made a terrible exposure of their base hypocrisy and unprincipled traffic in sacred things, stood in awe of the multitude, and trembled to carry their malignant designs into execution. They were the children of those who had slain the prophets, and they longed to imbrue their own hands in the blood of innocence; but cowardice had hitherto prevented "the murderous deed." Their

season of apprehension, however, was now past. The season was past, too, which had recently witnessed the boundless rejoicings of the multitude, and the spirit-stirring popular applause which attended the Saviour's triumphal entrance into the capital.

A change had taken place. Those whose loud and joyous hosannahs to the Son of David rent the air to-day, were heard shouting on the morrow, "Away with him! Away with him!" "His blood be on us and on our children!" And the echo of these fearful self-execrations, and of this voice of blood, had scarcely died away on the moaning breeze, when the women sallied forth "early in the morning, while it was yet dark," with a preparation of spices to anoint the body of Jesus. The whole enterprize was therefore hazardous in the extreme. The resentment of the Saviour's enemies had assumed the most terrible forms, threatening danger and death to all who should be bold enough to avow adherence to his cause. Here was a formidable discouragement; yet the affectionate Christian decision of a few helpless females trampled upon it. They were seeking Jesus; and whether he might be designated by his enemies Jesus of *Nazareth*, or Jesus of Bethlehem, their love to their Redeemer remained unalterable. They remembered his holy character—they remembered the moral glory of his deportment—they remembered his salutary instructions—they remembered his sympathies, and the earnestness with which he prosecuted the work of saving sinners; and, therefore, they resolutely encountered peril and reproach in the happy exercise of *seeking Jesus of Nazareth*.

III. Another class of discouragements, successfully met by these women, arose out of the fact that Jesus had been very recently crucified as a malefactor. Is it not dangerous to hold any friendly intercourse with the man whom the state has branded with the imputation of treasonable practices? Is not the danger greatly augmented, after the supposed criminal has had the solemn sentence of death by the hand of the public executioner, pronounced upon him? And who, that consults his reputation or his safety, would look but with frowns on the remains of the traitor, now cold and still? Jesus was crucified as no friend to Cæsar: his tomb was watched by the soldiers of Cæsar, and courageous soldiers they were. Here then was a powerful discouragement in the way of the women who came to visit the sepulchre.

But this was not all. The base and unfounded charge of being unfriendly to the state, and of plotting the subversion of

its civil institutions, was not the only accusation which his enemies had maliciously preferred against Jesus. When one count in the indictment failed, these dishonest men, in defiance of all law and all principle, were at no loss for forging another. They charged the holy Jesus with blasphemy. The lips of the Chief Priest, the highest functionary in the Jewish church, pronounced him to be guilty of the blasphemy. Here was a professed minister of God, acting the part of one of the devil's appointed agents, while from his hypocritical soul he affected deep concern for the divine honour; and as a specimen of solemn Pharisaic mockery, rent his clothes when our blessed Lord said in his hearing, "Hereafter, ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." These proceedings, it is true, on the part both of Roman power and Jewish pride and bigotry, were not only most iniquitous, but were afterwards discovered to be most iniquitous before the world; that circumstance, however, did not, in the mean time, alter the state of public feeling, nor lessen the amount of public odium which necessarily fell on all who betrayed attachment to Jesus at the period of his ignominy. We can easily form some estimate of the danger of resisting that upon which the mind of the multitude is set; clamours and uproar melted down the firmness of even the Roman governor: what evils, then, were not to be apprehended from their rude violence, when directed against those who, being weak and unprotected, possessed not the arm of power to shield them from wrong. The wavering mind would have conjured up a thousand obstacles in addition to those (and they were both numerous and formidable) which already existed. But faith, when it operates in the heart as a principle of heavenly power, can remove mountains—can annihilate obstacles—can triumph over opposition—can bring the soul to Jesus Christ, though public opinion and public indignation, though the tyrant's threat and the warrior's blood-stained sword may all combine to intercept its approach.

Such were the faith and love of the women who early visited the Saviour's sepulchre. The result of their Christian courage shows us what can be effected when there is a willing mind, and when the soul is lively in the service of its Lord. It teaches us that where there is devotedness of heart, the feet will be swift to run in the way of the divine commandments; and that love to God makes the yoke of Jesus easy, and his burden light. It furnishes an encouraging instance of the difficulties which, through faith and patience, have been triumph-

antly overcome in *seeking Jesus of Nazareth*. It is an illustrious example of female piety and devotedness, and the language which it addresses to the Christian at present is, "Go thou and do likewise." Hold on your way of truth, and love, and Christian benevolence; meet difficulty and danger with the *fortitude of the women* who came early to the sepulchre, and the Lord will scatter your enemies, and give you happy communion with the object of your faith and devotedness.

D.

THOUGHTS AND HINTS.

[At the request of a respected correspondent, we willingly give insertion to these *Thoughts and Hints*, with the *annexed* prayer, which were published in the form of a small tract, and are understood to be from the pen of the first Secession Minister of Donegore. They breathe the spirit of true zeal and piety; and, we trust that in accordance with the intention of their excellent author, the blessing of God may render them instrumental in alarming the stout-hearted, and those who are far from righteousness, and impressing all with the eternal importance of salvation. There is an unction about them which will recommend them to our readers.—EDIT.]

MY present course cannot continue long—death must soon put an end to it. But what is to be the lot of my soul when it has left the body? Ah! that requires a serious thought! An awful inquiry will be made on the course I have taken—I am sure there must be a life after death, because wicked men now prosper; and Christian people are despised by their drunken, blaspheming, and lewd neighbours. But this cannot always continue to be the case. He who made us is just, to punish such as offend him; and he is good to such as love him. Fully to make this known, it is appointed to men once to die, that afterwards they may be judged. What has been my course of life hitherto, and what do I now think about Christ, the Saviour of such as seek his mercy? Do I regard the will of God as revealed to men by the Scriptures? To have a Bible to read, and a Sabbath to keep holy, will render me inexcusable, if I die ignorant of salvation. Not only "the wicked shall be turned into hell, but all the people who forget God." Such as dislike to worship God on earth, will not enjoy the privilege of worshipping him in heaven. None but such as love God can be admitted there. It will be said to

some, in the day of judgment, "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his Angels." Why may not this be said of me? What is now the state of my soul? Pause a moment, for the subject is solemn.—Oh, if I live in jollity and sin, and care only for a dying body, and neglect the means of my soul being happy after death, what endless horror will befall me. Beyond all expression wretched, to be ordered to depart, and for ever to exist under the wrath of God! Ungodly as I have been, I have been spared by the mercy which I have long provoked! God be thanked, I am not yet in a hopeless case! Oh let me take heed, while any calls to salvation are heard! May I no longer trifle with God, or my conscience, or my soul! Lord give me repentance of my former sins—give me grace to understand the Scriptures—make me wise to salvation—dispose me to receive the advice of any who will teach me what I must do to be saved!

If you be now inclined to serve the Lord, begin the service by praying for eternal salvation, through the all-sufficient merits of Christ; obtain as much religious knowledge as you can on the Sabbath-day; read the Scriptures whenever you can gain opportunity; do unto others as you would they should do unto you. Suppose that hitherto you have not considered these things, you have the greater cause to bless God that they are once more set before you. Ask of God ability to retain and improve these hints which a real friend thus unexpectedly places in your way: be not ashamed of religion. The salvation of the soul is the greatest blessing God can bestow upon us, and its condemnation for sin the greatest curse he will inflict. God make you so to dread the one, as that you may most earnestly seek the other! Be assured of this, that nothing but love to God, and hope in his mercy through Christ, can comfort you in death. If the Gospel be hid, it is only hid to them that are lost; but it is, and it ever will be, the power of God to salvation, to all who obey it. If you laugh at this sincere endeavour to teach what you ought long ago to have known—if you yet will joke at the piety of such as wish you well—your ruin must be on your own head. You may never again be seriously told to prepare to meet your God, but meet him you must, prepared or unprepared. If, notwithstanding, you choose to revile, or blaspheme, or willingly to commit what God forbids—if you determine to hazard an appearance before the tribunal of God, and totally to renounce all that you might receive from the Gospel of his mercy—if you determine to go on in sin, and risk all consequences, the writer can only

say, he would lament your delusion, did he know it. A favour he asks, that you would solemnly think on the subject once more. If you will not oblige him thus far, give the paper to some other. The next person who reads this may desire the blessing, and dread the vengeance of God in the day when the secrets of all hearts will be disclosed and judged. The next person may be advised, though you will not, to read his Bible and other useful books, and to pray that he may, by the mercy of God, be fitted for heaven before he dies and leaves this world.

A PRAYER.

Merciful Lord ! as this dying life must soon be ended, and I must appear before thee to give an account of the deeds done in the body, prepare me, I beseech thee, for the hour of death and the day of judgment. Let thy mercy come unto me before I leave the present world ; give me true repentance of my sins, and firm faith in Christ Jesus the Saviour. By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, cause thou me to delight in that which is good ; shut not up my soul with the finally impenitent in a future state ; recover me by thy goodness from the snares of the world, the flesh, and the devil ; preserve me from being ashamed of thee or of thy Gospel, and from all prejudices against those who would teach me thy truth ; enable me henceforth to live according to thy word ; may thy grace assist me to observe what thou dost command, and diligently to hope for what thou hast promised ; that so, among the manyfold changes of this life, my heart may be fixed on true and everlasting joys. I ask those mercies for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The following chapters of Holy Scriptures are peculiarly plain :—Matthew xxv. xxvi. xxvii ; John iii. x. xiv ; Acts v. ix. xvi ; Romans v. viii. xii. xiii ; 1 Cor. xv ; 2 Cor. v ; Galatians iii. iv. vi ; Ephesians ii. v. vi ; Philippians iii ; 1 Thessalonians v ; 1 Timothy i. vi ; 2 Tim. iii ; Hebrews x. xi. xii ; James i ; 2 Peter ii. iii ; Rev. xxii.

ANECDOTES.

THE SLAVE TRADE.—The African Slave trade was commenced in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, by Sir John Hawkins. He attempted to justify the guilty traffic to the Queen, by representing the slaves as *voluntary* slaves—that he

carried them from their homes, friends, and country with their *consent*!—that he did so in pure *mercy*!!—that their *souls*! (the hypocrite) their souls were *precious* in his sight!!—and that their *conversion* was his great and darling object!!! The Queen had her misgivings. “If you,” said she, “force them from their homes without their consent, you will bring down the vengeance of heaven upon the land, and fearful will be the consequences of your crime.” Such was the commencement of negro slavery. It had its origin in fraud, violence, lying, and hypocrisy. The amount of oppression, misery and murder, perpetrated by that system, is beyond calculation.

In the House of Commons, on the 12th of May, Mr. Buxton entered into a statement to show the extent to which the Slave trade was now carried on. In one year and a-half, 81,956 Negroes had been introduced into five ports of Brazil. The trade at that time was only limited, but it was now abolished; yet, since 1830, in one year and a-half, 150,000 slaves had been introduced into that country. No less than 264 vessels from Cuba pursued the trade on the coast of Africa. Eight villages had been destroyed in order to supply the cargo for one vessel. Great mortality prevails among the slaves on the passage. In one vessel, which sailed from Africa with 562 slaves, and which was captured by one of our cruisers, there was a loss of 162 slaves. Forty of these had jumped overboard! Before the cargo was landed, the number was reduced to 253, who were in a wretched state. Another captured slaver had sailed with 970 slaves; but when the vessel was taken, 600 had already perished. In another case the entire cargo had perished. Immense numbers are crowded into a slaver, and they are exposed to great privations.

The member for Oldham said, until America was induced to acknowledge the reciprocal right of search, the Slave trade could not be prevented; and this would be manifest, when he mentioned, that no fewer than fifty-six vessels had recently been fitted out for the African coast, in the port of Baltimore alone.

MR. JUCE.--Not long after the year 1662, Mr. Grove, a gentleman of great opulence, whose seat was near Birdbush, upon his wife's lying dangerously ill, sent to the parish minister to pray with her. When the messenger came, he was just going out with the hounds, and sent word he would come when the hunt was over. At Mr. Groves expressing much resentment against the minister for choosing rather to follow his diversions than attend his wife, under the circumstances in which she lay, one

of the servants said, "Sir, our shepherd, if you will send for him, can pray very well, we have often heard him at prayer in the fields." Upon this he was immediately sent for, and Mr. Grove asking him whether he ever did or could pray, the shepherd fixed his eyes upon him, and with peculiar seriousness in his countenance, replied, "God forbid, Sir, I should for one day live without prayer." Hereupon he was desired to pray with the sick lady, which he did so pertinently to her case—with such fervency and fluency of devotion, as greatly to astonish the husband and all the family who were present.

When they arose from their knees, the gentleman addressed him to this effect:—"Your language and manner discover you to be a very different person from what your present appearance indicates; I conjure you to inform me who and what you are, and what were your views and situation in life, before you came into my service?" Whereupon "he told him he was one of the ministers who had lately been ejected from the church, and that, having nothing of his own left, he was content, for livelihood, to submit to the honest and peaceable employment of tending sheep." Upon hearing this, Mr. Grove said, "Then you shall be MY SHEPHERD," and immediately erected a meeting-house on his own estate, in which Mr. Juce preached to a gathered congregation of dissenters, which continues unto this day, upwards of 150 years from the beginning.

GOD SEES ME.—Persons inclined to the sin of stealing are satisfied if they only can be certain they shall not be discovered. I once heard it related, that a man who was in the habit of going to a neighbour's corn field, to steal ears, one day took with him his son, a boy of eight years of age. The father told him to hold the bag while he looked if any one was near to see him. After standing on the fence and peeping through all the corn rows, he returned to take the bag from the child, and began his guilty work. "Father," said the boy, "you forgot to look somewhere else." The man dropt the bag in affright and said, "Which way, my child?" supposing he had seen some one. "You forgot to look up to the sky, to see if God was noticing you." The father felt this reproof of the child so much that he left the corn, returned home, and never again ventured to steal; remembering the truth his child had taught him, that the eye of God always beholds us. "God sees me," is a thought that would keep us from evil acts if we tried constantly to feel its truth.

REV. R. HALL'S REPROOF OF DRAM-DRINKING.—A

person fond of brandy and water was in the custom of asking it in Mr. Hall's house, who felt a great difficulty in attempting to reprove him, as he was much older than himself. 'Yet,' says Mr. Hall, 'being persuaded that his ruin was inevitable unless something was done, I resolved upon one strong effort for his rescue. So the next time that he called, and as usual said, 'Friend Hall, I will thank you for a glass of brandy and water;' I replied, 'Call things by their right names and you shall have as much as you please.' 'Why, don't I employ the right name? I ask for a glass of brandy and water.' 'That is the current, but not the appropriate name. Ask for a glass of *liquid fire* and *distilled damnation*, and you shall have a gallon.' Poor man! he turned pale, and seemed struggling with anger. But knowing that I did not mean to insult him, he stretched out his hand and said, 'Brother Hall, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.' From that time he ceased to take brandy and water.

THE DEATH OF CHILDREN NOT THEIR GREATEST TROUBLE TO PARENTS.—A minister praying for a child apparently dying, said, "If it be thy will, spare ——." The distracted mother, interrupting him, cried, "It *must* be his will; I'll have no ifs." The child recovered—but lived to break his mother's heart. He was executed at the age of twenty-two.

UNITARIANISM NOT CHRISTIANITY.—A wit once caused a volume of Unitarian tracts to be lettered with the following sarcastic, but not inappropriate title, "Redemption made easy, or every man his own Saviour."

A DILEMMA FOR UNIVERSALISTS.—A Universalist preacher having once visited a certain village, and in a long discourse having endeavoured to disprove the doctrine of future punishment, proposed, if it were the wish of his audience, that he should return on that day month. An individual arose and thus addressed the preacher, "Sir, if your doctrine be true, we do not need you; if not true, we should not encourage you."

RESIGNATION.—A good woman, who was sick, being asked whether she would prefer to live or die, answered—"As God pleaseth." "But," said one that stood by, "if God should refer it to you, which would you choose?" "Truly," said she, "if God should refer it to me, I would even refer it to him again."

CHRISTIAN ATTAINMENTS.

THE real Christian does not wish to stop short in his attainments; he never thinks he has gone far enough in religion; he still desires to make greater progress in holiness than he has ever made before. In this we have also the example of Paul; "Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but this one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," &c. But on the contrary, the self-deceiver thinks he has gone far enough in religion. Nay, he scarcely imagines that he can make any advancement, for he counts himself to have apprehended. A great part of his exercise consists in contemplating and admiring the attainments which, according to his apprehension, he has already made; so, instead of worshipping God, he worships the creature of his own imagination. Instead of considering how far he is behind, he rather inclines to solace himself with his advancement before many around him, and to rest here. This is exemplified in the prayer of the Pharisee, "Lord, I thank thee, that I am not as other men."

THE NUMEROUS PLEASURES OF A THEATRE.

THE late Rev. James Hervey, of Weston Flavel, was once travelling with an elegant fashionable lady, in a stage-coach, who was largely expatiating on the numerous pleasures of attending a theatre. First, there was the pleasure of *anticipation* by night and by day. Secondly, there was the pleasure of *preparation* to visit a theatre. Thirdly, the pleasure of *journeying* to the theatre, being escorted by such delightful company. Fourthly, there was the pleasure, most exuberant and ecstatic, of witnessing the performances, hearing the delightful music, beholding the descriptive scenery, looking round on the splendid dresses, and being enraptured with the manners, condescension and affability of the great. Then, lastly, there were all the hosts of pleasures in talking of it, thinking of it, and reflecting about it for days afterwards. Mr. Hervey ventured to remark, there were two pleasures which this lady had totally forgotten, even in her ample enumeration. O, Sir, that is quite impossible; let me go over them again; which she did with considerable enlargement. "Well, Sir, what are the two pleasures you say I must have forgotten?" "They are, Ma-

dam, the pleasures you will enjoy in reflecting upon the theatre at the hour of *death* and in the day of *judgment*; for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the reward of things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The lady was struck dumb, blushed, sat silent, softly wept, and, at the next town, suddenly left the coach. Mr. Hervey will meet her again in the day of judgment.

RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION.

Proverbs xiv. 34.

'Tis not the brave, the rich, the wise,
 Alone who make a nation rise;
 Not these alone their land befriend,
 Or far and wide its fame extend:—
 But every one, in each degree,
 Who strives to keep his spirit free
 From sin, and loves the truth to spread,
 Helps to exalt his country's head;
 And merits—though unknown to fame
 He live and die—a patriot's name.

The Cottage Muse.

DIED, of paralysis, on Thursday, the 23d of May, in Unagh, near Cookstown, Mr. William M'Kinney, aged 61. He was for many years, a respected elder in the Presbyterian Secession congregation of Cookstown, and, through life, he was esteemed by all denominations as an upright man, and a zealous and sincere Christian.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Conductors of the Christian Freeman.

GENTLEMEN,—Having been on a visit lately at the house of a friend near Ballynure, I took up a pocket Bible, bearing date 1714. One hundred and nineteen years have, therefore, elapsed since it was printed. On the page opposite the dedication, are the following beautiful and appropriate lines. My friend, now entering his 86th year, repeated them to me exactly as they appear in the book, and told me, that in all the parish of Ballynure, there is only another Bible besides his own, containing a copy of the same verses; and much did he lament, that

such an excellent preface to the holy Scriptures was in all likelihood soon to be buried in oblivion.

Now, gentlemen, as there is little probability that it will ever be prefixed to our Bibles again, I forward you a *verbatim* copy, hoping that you will devote a page of the Christian Freeman to rescue these excellent, though antiquated verses, from the fate that otherwise awaits them.

I am, &c.

S. WALKER.

Shaneshill, near Templepatrick, Aug. 14th, 1833.

OF THE INCOMPARABLE TREASURE OF THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

HERE is the Spring where Waters flow,
To quench our Heat of Sin ;
Here is the Tree where Truth doth grow,
To lead our Lives therein ;
Here is the Judge that stints the strife,
When Men's Devices fail ;
Here is the Bread that Feeds the Life,
That Death cannot Assail.
The Tidings of Salvation dear,
Come to ours ears from Thence ;
The Fortress of our Faith is here,
And Shield of our Defence ;
Then be not like the Hog that hath,
A Pearl at his Desire,
And takes more Pleasure in the Trough,
And Wallowing in the Mire.
Read not this Book in any case
But with a Single Eye—
Read not, but first desire God's Grace
To understand thereby :
Pray still in Faith with this Respect
To Fructifie therein,
That Knowledge may bring this Effect
To Mortify thy Sin.
Then Happy thou in all thy Life,
What so to thee Befalls,
Yea, Doubly Happy shalt thou be
When God by Death thee calls.